

Section III — 1997 Accountability Rating Criteria and Standards

Determining district accreditation status and campus ratings is a multi-step process. First, for every district and campus, performance on the base indicators is evaluated against performance standards to determine an initial rating. Depending on that result, the district or campus may be required to meet additional performance criteria to maintain that initial determination, or perhaps to exceed it. These additional criteria are defined in Chapter 39 of the *Texas Education Code*. Performance standards on the indicators are defined by the commissioner of education. A summary of the 1997 standards, Table 1, appears on page 10.

Base Indicators

The accountability system for 1997 uses spring 1997 and spring 1996 performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), the 1995-96 and 1994-95 annual Dropout Rates, and the 1995-96 Student Attendance Rate as the base indicators to determine district accreditation status and campus ratings.

The district accreditation status and campus rating depend on meeting all of the TAAS, dropout rate, and attendance rate standards, as well as any additional performance requirements, for that rating category.

TAAS

All grades tested in English in reading, mathematics, and writing in the spring of 1997 will be considered.

At the exit-level, only grade 10 spring results will be considered. As in the past, all grade 10 spring test takers will be considered, including both first-time tested and retested students.

Only performance of students enrolled **in the district** as of the PEIMS fall “snapshot” date of October 25, 1996 will be considered in district and campus ratings. (This is referred to as the “October” or “accountability” subset.)

Only performance of students not served in special education will be considered.

For individual student groups, only performance of those meeting minimum size requirements will be evaluated.

Table 1: ACCOUNTABILITY RATING STANDARDS FOR 1997

	Exemplary †	Recognized †	Academically Acceptable / Acceptable	Academically Unacceptable / Low-performing
Base Indicator Standards				
Spring '97 TAAS • Reading • Writing • Mathematics	at least 90.0% passing each subject area (<i>all students & each student group *</i>)	at least 75.0% passing each subject area (<i>all students & each student group *</i>)	at least 35.0% passing each subject area (<i>all students and each student group *</i>)	below 35.0% passing any subject area (<i>all students or any student group *</i>)
1995-96 Dropout Rate	1.0% or less (<i>all students and each student group *</i>)	3.5% or less (<i>all students and each student group *</i>)	6.0% or less (<i>all students and each student group *</i>) ‡	above 6.0% (<i>all students or any student group *</i>) ‡
1995-96 Attendance Rate	at least 94.0% (grades 1-12) ★	at least 94.0% (grades 1-12) ★	at least 94.0% (grades 1-12)	at least 94.0% (grades 1-12)
Additional Performance Requirements				
Required Improvement	not applicable	for each TAAS subject area below 80.0% passing (<i>all students and each student group *</i>), actual change between 1997 & 1996 TAAS met or exceeded the change needed to reach 90.0% passing within 5 years	for each TAAS subject area with less than 35.0% passing (<i>all students and each student group *</i>), actual change between 1997 & 1996 TAAS met or exceeded the change needed to reach 50.0% passing within 5 years AND / OR for any dropout rate above 6% (<i>all students and each student group</i>), actual change between 1995 & 1996 dropout rate met or exceeded the change needed to reach a 6.0% rate within 5 years	for each TAAS subject area with less than 35.0% passing (<i>all students and each student group *</i>), actual change between 1997 & 1996 TAAS was insufficient to reach 50.0% passing within 5 years AND/ OR for any dropout rate above 6.0% (<i>all students and each student group *</i>), actual change between 1995 & 1996 dropout rate was insufficient to reach a 6.0% rate within 5 years

† A district cannot be rated *Exemplary* or *Recognized* if it has one or more *Low-performing* campuses.

* Student groups are African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged.

‡ If a district or campus would be rated *Academically Unacceptable / Low-performing* solely because of a dropout rate exceeding 6.0% for a single student group (not all students), then the district or campus will be rated *Academically Acceptable / Acceptable* if that single dropout rate is less than 10.0%, and has declined from the previous year.

★ Districts may appeal to use 1996-97 attendance rates if failure to meet the attendance rate standard is the sole reason that the district or one of its campuses did not earn the *Exemplary* or *Recognized* rating.

If failure to meet the attendance rate standard is the sole reason that a district would receive an accreditation status of *Academically Unacceptable* or a campus rating of *Low-performing*, then that requirement will be waived.

TAAS (cont.)

In 1997, district evaluation will not include the performance of students attributed to:

- ➡ identified shared services arrangement alternative education schools (fiscal agents only); or
- ➡ identified privately operated residential treatment facilities.

In 1997, district evaluation will include the performance of students served by juvenile justice alternative education programs (JJAEPs).

Percent passing each subject area of the TAAS will be used:

Reading	(summed across grades 3-8, and 10);
Mathematics	(summed across grades 3-8, and 10); and
Writing	(summed across grades 4, 8, and 10).

The equation used to determine the percent passing is illustrated using reading:

$$\frac{\text{Number of students } \textit{passing} \text{ Reading}}{\text{Number of students } \textit{tested in} \text{ Reading}}$$

All calculations are rounded to one decimal place.

Not only total students, but each of the student groups (African American, Hispanic, White and Economically Disadvantaged) meeting minimum size requirements must meet the standard to achieve the *Exemplary*, *Recognized*, or *Academically Acceptable / Acceptable* ratings.

STANDARDS FOR TAAS

- ★ For a campus or district rating of **Exemplary**, at least 90.0 percent of total students and students in each group must pass each section of the TAAS.
- ★ For a campus or district rating of **Recognized**, at least 75.0 percent of total students and students in each group must pass each section of the TAAS **and** Required Improvement must be demonstrated.

TAAS (cont.)

- ★ For a rating of **Academically Acceptable** (district) or **Acceptable** (campus), at least 35.0 percent of total students and students in each group must pass each section of the TAAS. Districts and campuses can also receive a rating of **Academically Acceptable** (district) or **Acceptable** (campus) if Required Improvement is demonstrated in all low-performing areas and groups.
- ★ Those districts (or campuses) not meeting the standard for **Academically Acceptable** (or **Acceptable**) or higher and not achieving Required Improvement in the low performing areas will be rated **Academically Unacceptable** (or **Low-performing**).

Details on the calculation of Required Improvement are provided later in this section.

Dropout Rate

All dropouts for the 1995-96 school year reported on 1996-97 PEIMS Submission 1, grades 7 through 12, are considered. Students served in special education are included in the dropout count.

Reported dropouts are removed from the dropout count for accountability purposes as part of the state-level dropout recovery process if they:

- ➡ are "recovered" through searches of other agency statewide data files, or
- ➡ were reported as expelled due to criminal behavior which occurred at school or a school event, or
- ➡ were reported as foreign students returning to their home country, or
- ➡ were reported as meeting all graduation requirements except passing exit-level TAAS. For an explanation of the dropout recovery process, see Section XII, Additional Information.

Annual dropout rates are examined for accountability purposes if there are 10 or more reported dropouts. In cases where there are fewer than 10 total dropouts, the accountability rating will be based on TAAS performance and attendance rate only. In cases where a student group has fewer than 10 dropouts, the dropout rate for that group **does not** affect the accountability rating.

The annual dropout rate is based on cumulative membership in grades 7-12 for the entire school year. Membership is determined from the end-of-year attendance reported on 1995-96 PEIMS Submission 3.

All groups meeting the minimum size requirements — total students and each student group — must meet the standard to achieve a rating of *Exemplary* or *Recognized*.

Dropout Rate (cont.)

All groups meeting the minimum size requirements — total students and each student group — must meet the standard to achieve a rating of *Academically Acceptable* / *Acceptable*, unless Required Improvement is met and / or the Single Student Group Dropout Waiver is applicable.

The dropout rate is determined using the following equation, which is rounded to one decimal place:

$$\frac{\begin{array}{l} \text{Number of 1995-96 Dropouts Reported,} \\ \text{less Recovered Dropouts,} \\ \text{less Dropouts Expelled for Criminal Behavior,} \\ \text{less Dropouts Identified as Foreign Students Returning to their Home Country,} \\ \text{less Dropouts Identified as Meeting All Graduation Requirements except Passing Exit-level TAAS} \end{array}}{\text{Cumulative Membership in Grades 7-12 for 1995-96}}$$

SINGLE STUDENT GROUP DROPOUT WAIVER:

- ➡ If a district would be rated *Academically Unacceptable*, or a campus rated *Low-performing*, solely due to one student group (African American, Hispanic, White, or Economically Disadvantaged) exceeding the 6.0 percent standard, then the *Academically Acceptable* / *Acceptable* rating will be assigned if the following conditions apply:
 - (1) the 1995-96 dropout rate for that student group is less than 10.0 percent; and
 - (2) for that student group, the 1995-96 dropout rate is less than the 1994-95 dropout rate.
- ➡ The waiver cannot be applied if:
 - (1) the single dropout rate exceeding 6.0 percent is the “all students” rate; or
 - (2) more than one group exceeds the dropout standard after Required Improvement is applied.
- ➡ Note that for 1997, meeting minimum size requirements in the prior year is no longer a qualifying condition for applying the waiver.
- ➡ If the Single Student Group Dropout Waiver has been applied, the district rating is *Academically Acceptable* or the campus rating will be *Acceptable*, even if:
 - (1) TAAS performance meets the *Exemplary* or *Recognized* standards; or
 - (2) the attendance rate is below the *Acceptable* standard.

Dropout Rate (cont.)

STANDARDS FOR DROPOUT RATE

- ★ *An annual dropout rate of 1.0 percent or less must be demonstrated for total students and for each student group for a rating of **Exemplary**.*
- ★ *An annual dropout rate of 3.5 percent or less must be demonstrated for total students and for each student group for a rating of **Recognized**.*
- ★ *An annual dropout rate of 6.0 percent or less must be demonstrated for total students and for each student group for a rating of **Academically Acceptable** for districts or **Acceptable** for campuses. Districts and campuses can also receive a rating of **Academically Acceptable** (district) or **Acceptable** (campus) if Required Improvement is demonstrated for all low-performing groups, or if the Single Student Group Dropout Waiver has been applied.*
- ★ *Those districts (or campuses) not meeting the standard for **Academically Acceptable** (or **Acceptable**) or higher, and not achieving Required Improvement in low-performing groups will be rated **Academically Unacceptable** (or **Low-performing**).*

Details on the calculation of Required Improvement are provided later in this section.

Attendance Rate

1995-96 attendance for all students in grades 1 through 12 will be considered. Students served in special education in these grades are included in the calculation of the attendance rate.

Attendance for the entire school year will be used. The attendance rate is determined using the following equation, which is rounded to one decimal place:

$$\frac{\text{Total Number of Days Students in Grades 1-12 were Present in 1995-96}}{\text{Total Number of Days Students in Grades 1-12 were in Membership in 1995-96}}$$

STANDARDS FOR ATTENDANCE RATE

- ★ *An attendance rate of 94.0 percent or higher for all students in grades 1-12 is necessary for a rating of **Exemplary**, **Recognized**, or **Academically Acceptable / Acceptable**.*

Attendance Rate (cont.)

- ★ If failure to meet the attendance rate standard is the sole reason that a district would be rated **Academically Unacceptable**, or a school **Low-per**
- ★ **forming**, even if the Single Student Group Dropout Waiver has been applied, then the attendance rate standard will be waived.
- ★ If failure to meet the attendance rate standard is the sole reason that a school or a district would not be rated **Exemplary** or **Recognized**, then the school or district may appeal that the rating be re-evaluated using current year attendance, if current year attendance meets or exceeds the standard.

Base Indicator Summary

The **maximum** number of indicator standards for each rating vary. Most districts and schools do not have to meet the maximum number because they do not meet size minimums for every student group for every indicator, or because the indicator does not apply to their school. As an example, schools serving grades 6 and below are not required to meet the maximum number of criteria because dropout rates are not considered in determining their ratings. The larger and more demographically diverse the school or district, the higher the number of criteria which must be met to earn the accountability rating. (See Section V, *Special Issues and Exceptions* for information on size requirements.)

Additional Performance Requirements

Beyond evaluation of performance against set standards, statute mandates that in certain cases, performance trends must also be evaluated. A district accreditation status or campus rating cannot be finalized until this second step in the process is completed. For 1997, Required Improvement is the only additional performance requirement to impact accountability ratings; it is a factor for both *Recognized* and *Academically Unacceptable / Low-performing*. Table 2 graphs these requirements, based on the initial rating earned.

Required Improvement

Required Improvement depends upon the comparison of prior year TAAS performance to current year performance, and may depend on comparison of two years of dropout rates. Unless exception criteria apply, campuses must have performance results for both years in order to demonstrate Required Improvement.

Required Improvement must be demonstrated:

- (1) for districts and campuses to be rated *Recognized*; and

Table 2: 1997 INDICATOR STANDARDS EVALUATED

	All Students	Afr. American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.	All Students	Afr. American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.	All Students	Afr. American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.	All Students	Afr. American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.	Attendance	All Students	Afr. American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.	All Students	Afr. American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.	All Students	Afr. American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.					
Initial Rating	Reading					Mathematics					Writing					1995-96 Dropout Rate					95 %	TAAS Reading					TAAS Mathematics					TAAS Writing					Dropouts				
	1997 TAAS										Dropout Rate											REQUIRED IMPROVEMENT																			
Exemplary	✓	●	●	●	●	✓	●	●	●	●	✓	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓																				
Recognized	✓	●	●	●	●	✓	●	●	●	●	✓	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*				
Acceptable	✓	●	●	●	●	✓	●	●	●	●	✓	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓																				
Low-performing	✓	●	●	●	●	✓	●	●	●	●	✓	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓																				
<div>LEGEND: ✓ Evaluated</div> <div>● Evaluated if Minimum Size Requirements are met.</div> <div>■ Not Evaluated</div> <div>* Evaluated if TAAS percent passing is < 80.0 and minimum size requirements are met.</div> <div>■ Evaluated if TAAS percent passing is < 35.0 and minimum size requirements are met.</div> <div>■ Evaluated if dropout rate is > 6.0 and minimum size requirements are met.</div>																																									

All students performance is always evaluated for TAAS and the attendance rate. Individual student group performance and the all students dropout rate are evaluated only if minimum size requirements are met. Therefore, a school or district could be evaluated on 4 - 21 criteria to determine its initial rating.

Required Improvement (cont.)

(2) for districts and campuses to avoid being rated *Academically Unacceptable* or *Low-performing*, even if one or more TAAS subject areas is below 35.0 percent passing, or the dropout rate is greater than 6.0 percent. A campus or district demonstrating Required Improvement on all deficient indicators will be rated *Academically Acceptable* or *Acceptable*.

Small numbers criteria will be applied to performance results for both years before evaluating Required Improvement. (See Section V, *Special Issues and Exceptions* for details on these criteria.) At the *Recognized* level, Required Improvement does not have to be demonstrated if the small numbers criteria are not met. However, at the *Low-performing* / *Academically Unacceptable* level, Required Improvement **cannot** be met if small numbers criteria apply.

Recognized

For a district or campus initially rated of *Recognized*, Required Improvement is **calculated only for those TAAS measures with passing rates between 75.0 and 79.9 percent**. Required Improvement is calculated as the amount of improvement needed between 1996 and 1997 on TAAS to reach a target of 90.0 percent passing in five years. If Required Improvement has not been fully demonstrated, the final district accreditation status will be *Academically Acceptable* and the campus rating will be *Acceptable*.

Required Improvement may be calculated for one or more of the following:

- ➡ TAAS mathematics, total students and / or any student group;
- ➡ TAAS reading, total students and / or any student group; and / or
- ➡ TAAS writing, total students and / or any student group.

The calculations are rounded to one decimal place.

$$\underbrace{(\% \text{ passing TAAS in '97}) - (\% \text{ passing TAAS in '96})}_{\text{Actual Change}} \quad \begin{array}{c} \blacktriangle \\ \text{must be greater than} \\ \text{or equal to} \end{array} \quad \underbrace{\frac{(90\%) - (\% \text{ passing TAAS in '96})}{5}}_{\text{Required Improvement}}$$

If the actual change in performance meets or exceeds the change required to meet the standard, then the district or campus has demonstrated Required Improvement for that subject area and student group.

Exceptions. The Required Improvement standard is waived and a rating of *Recognized* is assigned if a campus does not have two years of TAAS results but meets the base indicator standards for *Recognized*. An example of this situation is a newly-opened campus.

Academically Unacceptable / Low-Performing

For a district or campus initially rated *Academically Unacceptable* or *Low-performing*, Required Improvement is calculated **only for those indicators which fall below the standard and are, therefore, the cause of that initial rating**. This means that for *Academically Unacceptable* districts and *Low-performing* campuses, Required Improvement may be calculated for one or more of the following:

- TAAS mathematics, total students and / or any student group;
- TAAS reading, total students and / or any student group;

***Academically
Unacceptable /
Low-Performing
(cont.)***

TAAS writing, total students and / or any student group;
annual dropout rate, total students and / or any student group.

TAAS REQUIRED IMPROVEMENT.

For TAAS, Required Improvement is evaluated for only those subject areas and student groups not meeting the performance standard for the *Academically Acceptable / Acceptable* rating (35.0 percent passing). Required Improvement in this case is defined as sufficient improvement to reach 50.0 percent passing in five years. All calculations are rounded to one decimal place.

$$\underbrace{(\% \text{ passing TAAS in '97}) - (\% \text{ passing TAAS in '96})}_{\text{Actual Change}} \quad \begin{array}{c} \blacktriangle \\ \text{must be greater than} \\ \text{or equal to} \end{array} \quad \underbrace{\frac{(50\%) - (\% \text{ passing TAAS in '96})}{5}}_{\text{Required Improvement}}$$

DROPOUT RATE REQUIRED IMPROVEMENT.

For the dropout rate, Required Improvement is the change in the annual dropout rate needed to reach an annual rate of 6.0 percent in five years, compared to the actual yearly change in the annual dropout rate. **The calculation is only made for those groups where the district or campus does not meet the performance standard for the *Academically Acceptable / Acceptable* rating (i.e., has a dropout rate above 6.0 percent for grades 7-12).** All calculations are rounded to one decimal place.

$$\underbrace{(1995-96 \text{ Dropout Rate}) - (1994-95 \text{ Dropout Rate})}_{\text{Actual Change}} \quad \begin{array}{c} \blacktriangle \\ \text{must be less than} \\ \text{or equal to} \end{array} \quad \underbrace{\frac{(6\%) - (1994-95 \text{ Dropout Rate})}{5}}_{\text{Required Improvement}}$$

Note that this calculation measures *reductions* in rates, not gains as with TAAS results. The actual change in the dropout rates needs to be *less than or equal to* the calculated required improvement for the standard to be met.

Comparable Improvement

Comparable Improvement is another statutorily defined improvement measure. In 1997, Comparable Improvement will not affect the accountability rating of any district or school; however, campus Comparable Improvement in Reading and Mathematics will be reported on AEIS. (See Section VIII, *1997 Campus Comparable Improvement*.)

1997 Ratings Summary

A district or campus must pass each and every applicable standard to be rated *Exemplary*, *Recognized*, or *Academically Acceptable / Acceptable*. If every standard for a rating is not met, then the next lower rating is assigned if the conditions for the next lower rating are met. This means that a campus will receive a rating of *Acceptable* if it meets the dropout and TAAS standards for *Recognized*, but has an attendance rate below 94.0 percent. As another example, a campus with a 32 percent passing rate in reading for economically disadvantaged students, which could not demonstrate Required Improvement for that subject area and student group, would be rated *Low-performing* even if all other standards for the *Acceptable* rating were met.

Special Circumstances. The information in this section explains the standard process for determining the 1997 ratings for districts and campuses. The overwhelming majority can be determined this way. However, some situations pertaining to size of the district or campus and grade configuration may require more specialized analysis to fairly determine a rating. (See Section V, *Special Issues and Exceptions*.)

